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CU police arrest 172 in CIA protest

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University of Colorado police arrested more than 170 nonviolent protesters who tried to enter a campus building Tuesday to make "citizens' arrests" of recruiters from the Central Intelligence Agency.

Demonstrators were arrested in small groups as they crossed a line of officers in front of Willard Hall, where the CIA is conducting employment interviews this week.

Protesters sang and waved to bystanders as they were driven in buses to CU police headquarters. They were charged with "attempted interference with faculty and staff and students of an educational institution," a misdemeanor, and were then released.

Campus police reported 172 arrests Thursday night. Protesters said the figure was 174.

At a meeting Tuesday night, many of the demonstrators made clear their intention to return today and face arrest again.

They hope for a jury trial that would allow them to air charges that CIA recruiters are part of a conspiracy to commit murder and other crimes.

About 110 of the protesters attended the meeting. When asked if they intended to return today, about three-quarters of them raised their hands. Protest leaders said they hope to exceed Tuesday's arrest total today.

The protest was organized by Community in Action, a coalition of Boulder and CU groups that tried unsuccessfully last week to persuade Boulder County District Attorney Alex Hunter to lodge criminal charges against the CIA recruiters.

The coalition has charged that the CIA is promoting "murder, rape and arson" in Central America. Recruiting on campus amounts to "conspiring, aiding and abetting" the CIA's actions, its members claimed.

Approximately 200 people were on hand at mid-morning to watch or take part in the demonstration, according to an unofficial police estimate. In addition, about 25 reporters, photographers and cameramen swarmed around the events.

Late in the afternoon, when the last busload of protesters had been shuttled to police headquarters, CU officials expressed relief that the demonstration had been orderly. Kaye Howe, vice chancellor for academic services, said there would be no disciplinary action against CU students, faculty or staff members who participated — as long as the protest "stays at this level."

CU officials and leaders of the coalition met late Tuesday to discuss what will happen during the next two days as CIA recruiters continue to operate on campus.

"Our hope is that (the demonstrators) will be happy with what they've accomplished and let it stop there," CU police Capt. Jim Fadenrecht said. "But that may be just a hope."

Demonstrators said Tuesday night that their initial day of protest was only a first step.

"The very moral and courageous stand we took today will become merely a very moral and courageous statement if we don't do anything tomorrow," a student, Jonathan Lindgren, said.

Protesters said Tuesday night that CU police had told them to expect an additional misdemeanor charge and a bond if they're arrested again today.

The symbolic protest did not interrupt CIA recruiting efforts and may have helped, according to University and CIA officials.

Gordon Gray, director of University career services, said the CIA is already among the top 10 recruiters on campus in attracting candidates for employment.

Early in the day, Gray told reporters the CIA expected to interview 170 students and recent graduates during its three days of recruiting. Later, he

revised the figure to 180 after hearing more expressions of interest, and said "we have turned away dozens of applicants."

The CIA is "the best-advertised recruiter we've ever had," Gray said.

Similar protests have been staged at other campuses around the country this year. CU's was one of the "six to 10 largest," according to Tom White, a Denver-based CIA recruiter. But White, one of five interviewers who met with applicants on Tuesday, said the protest made no difference.

"It doesn't bother us," he said. "In fact, it has increased the phone calls to my office in Denver."

The only meeting between a demonstrator and CIA officials occurred early in the morning, when one member of the group — "a plant," in White's words — presented himself as an applicant and then attempted to make a citizen's arrest.

For the rest of the day, applicants went through preliminary interviews covering their background and interests. No one is asked "to violate the law, to kill or to assassinate," White said.

Among the questions an applicant might eventually be asked are "Would you like to spy overseas? Would you like to do analytical work? Where would you like to fit in?" White said.

Applicants considered for CIA employment would face a rigorous security investigation and a polygraph test.

Gray told reporters Tuesday morning that the University admitted the CIA to campus as "a legitimate employer doing business as any other employer would."

"From our perspective, it's business as usual," he said.

As Gray spoke, protesters were assembling in opposition to business as usual.

Doris Havice, 77, CU professor emeritus of religious studies and a faculty member for 25 years, was the first to speak and among the first to be arrested.

Havice said the presence of CIA recruiters on campus was destructive.

"I think the University has a responsibility not to invite agencies like the CIA, which are doing illegal things — promoting vicious things in Nicaragua like cutting off kids' heads and tak-

ing them to their mothers," she said.

"I'm very concerned that the University has gotten itself into this kind of stupidity," Havice said.

Shortly after Havice and two other demonstrators spoke, the three of them moved together toward CU police.

"If you cross that line," CU police Sgt. Dave Evans said politely, "you'll be arrested." Smiling, Havice crossed the line with Virginia Alvarado and Gonzalo Santos, and the three of them were ushered into Willard Hall.

The scene was repeated doz-

ens of times throughout the day, as both the police and the dissidents played carefully orchestrated parts. Each protester spoke briefly into a microphone. Protesters walked toward the police in small groups, their arms linked. Police told them to stop. They took another step and were arrested.

Only a few spectators expressed opposition to the protest.

"Don't you have anything better to do?" an amplified voice boomed out of an adjacent building shortly before 10 a.m. "Don't you have any classes to go to?"

